

Upper Mill Creek Canyon Road Improvements Project

Salt Lake County Council Update



- Agenda
 - Mill Creek Canyon Project Considerations
 - ✓ Project Partners and Funding
 - ✓ Project Purpose and Need
 - ✓ Activities to Date
 - ✓ Public Input
 - ✓ Design Update
 - ✓ Environmental Update
 - ✓ Schedule
 - ✓ Next steps



Agenda

Project Partners

- Federal Highway Administration Central Federal Lands Highway Division (FHWA-CFLHD)
- Salt Lake County
- Millcreek
- US Forest Service (USFS), Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest



FHWA Federal Lands Access Program

- Improve transportation facilities on or adjacent to federal lands
- Emphasis on high-use federal recreation sites
- Supplements state and local resources for public roads, transit systems, and other transportation facilities
- Federal and local match: costs are split between federal and local project partners

Project Partners and the Federal Lands Access Program

Present Project Considerations

- Infrastructure focused project
- Operations and maintenance are not changing
- USFS will reissue easement to County for entire roadway
- Future projects are not being precluded
- Future Project Considerations
 - Lower canyon improvements and FLAP funding Application submitted November 2024



Present Project and Future Project Considerations

- Purpose
 - Enhance access for motorists and recreationists using upper Mill Creek Canyon Road

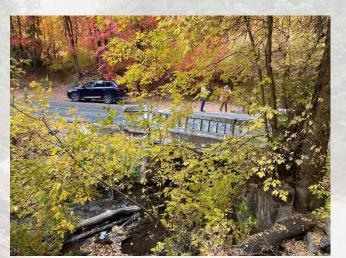
Needs to Address

- Deteriorating road condition
- Variable road width
- Lack of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure
- Informal roadside parking that causes safety concerns



Purpose & Need / Project Location

- Preliminary Design
- NEPA
- Agency meetings and coordination
- Public Meetings
 - Three public open houses [11/21, 5/22, 6/23 (virtual and in person)]
- Cabin Association coordination
- Central Wasatch Commission
- Mayoral Update







Activities to Date

- Major comment themes include the following:
 - Minimize roadway width to minimize environmental resource impacts
 - Include a bicycle lane to the top
 - Parking area improvements, more parking, and less parking
 - Transit
 - Travel speed
 - Firs Cabin leaseholder access
 - Level of environmental review



What Have We Heard

- Proposed Improvements
 - Roadway improvements
 - Parking area improvements
 - Bridge, culvert, and drainage improvements
 - Other improvements
 - Striping and signing
 - Trail connections
 - Sight distance improvements
 - Communications conduit

Design Considerations

- ✓ Does it meet the purpose and need?
- Does it minimize environmental impacts?
- Does it enhance bicycle and pedestrian safety?
- ✓ Does it improve driver expectation?
- ✓ Does it preclude future options?
- ✓ Can it be built?
- ✓ How much does it cost?

Proposed Improvements

- Three proposed roadway
 widths:
 - Winter Gate to Elbow Fork,
 24 feet wide
 - Elbow Fork to Upper Big Water Trailhead
 - 20 feet wide
 - At three constrained locations
 18 feet wide

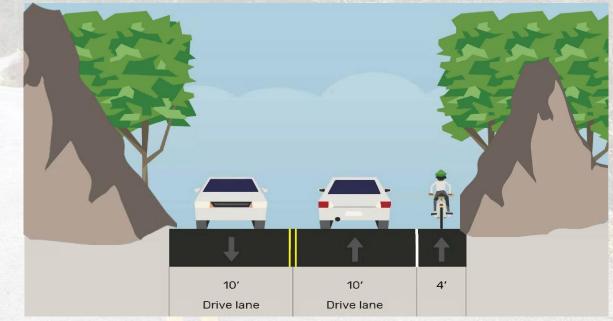


Proposed Improvements: Roadway Improvements Overview

Existing

- 1.4 miles long
- Width varies from 16 to 24 feet
- Proposed
 - 24-foot-wide roadway
 - Two 10-foot travel lanes
 - One 4-foot bicycle lane on the uphill side
 - Curve modifications





Proposed Improvements: Roadway Improvements, Winter Gate to Elbow Fork

Existing

- 3.2 miles long
- Width varies from 13 to 20 feet

Proposed

- 20-foot-wide roadway
 - Two 10-foot travel lanes
- Curve modifications
- Minimizes impacts in the narrower upper canyon





Proposed Improvements: Roadway Improvements, Elbow Fork to Upper Big Water Trailhead

Existing

 Sensitive resources are located near the roadway, such as Firs Cabins, Thousand Springs (beaver pond), stone bridge #1

Proposed

- 18-foot-wide roadway
- Two 9-foot travel lanes
- A narrower road results in fewer impacts to the natural environment





Proposed Improvements: Roadway Improvements, Constrained Locations

- Why Alter Parking Areas?
 - Improved circulation and access
 - Easier maintenance
 - Staging for emergency response
 - Safety
 - Accommodate future potential transit use
 - Formalized parking reduces environmental impacts, such as erosion and social trails

Which parking areas are affected?

- Maple Grove Picnic Area (Winter Gate)
- White Bridge Picnic Area
- Elbow Fork Trailhead
- Alexander Basin Trailhead
- Upper Big Water Trailhead
- Informal Parking Areas



Proposed Improvements: Parking Area Improvements

- White Bridge replacement
 - Historic feature, mitigation developed in coordination with USFS and SHPO
 - New bridge railing being designed to match the existing railing
- Culverts
- Water Quality Features
 - Detention basins
 - Swales
 - Curb and Gutter
 - Ditches







Proposed Improvements: Bridge, Culvert, and Drainage Improvements

- Other Associated Features and Improvements
 - Striping and signing
 - Crosswalks
 - Pedestrian and bicyclist specific signage
 - Trail connections
 - Sight distance improvements
 - Conduit for future communication
 - Speed limit and other operations unchanged



Proposed Improvements: Associated Improvements

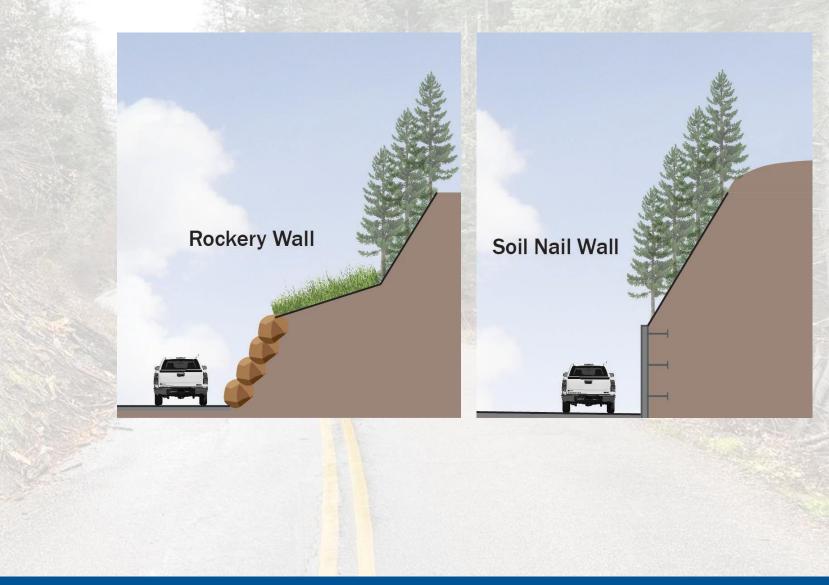
Retaining Walls

Rockery Walls

Located in improved Big Water Trailhead and new Alexander Basin Trailhead parking areas

Soil Nail Walls

3 locations in upper canyon (approximately 700 linear feet total, 10-15 ft. high – concrete will be colored/textured to reduce visual impacts



Proposed Improvements: Retaining Walls

Environmental Assessment (EA)

- In response to public input, FHWA-CFLHD prepared an EA
- The EA describes the proposed action and present environmental consequences of the preliminary design
- Public had an opportunity to review the EA before any decision is made on the project
- FHWA-CFLHD prepared its decision document after the EA public review period
- Comment response included in the decision documet

Criteria for Consideration

- Beneficial and adverse effects
- Concerns with public health or safety
- Impacts to sensitive resources, such as federally listed species, wetlands, and historic properties
- Individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts
- Public concerns related to environmental issues

NEPA Class of Action: Environmental Assessment

- Air Quality
- Archeology
- Architectural History -
- Aquatic Resources
- Biological Resources
- Environmental Justice
- Floodplains
- Land use

- Noise
- Paleontology
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Water quality
- Section 4(f)
- Section 6(f)
- Visual
- Roadless areas

Resource reports include:

- Aquatic Resources Delineation Report
- Archeological Resources Report
- Architectural Resources Report
- Cultural Resources Report (for public)
- Biological Resources Report (for public)
- Other Resources Report (for public), which includes aquatic resources, land use, visual resources, recreation and access

EA Resource Topics

NEPA

 Both the US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Central Federal Lands Highway Division and the **USDA Forest Service Salt Lake** Ranger District, Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) FHWA CFL - May 14, 2024 US Forest Service – July 31, 2024

Design and Construction Schedule

- Summer 2024, Final Design
- Fall 2024, Advertise and Awarded Construction Contract
- Spring 2025 (May 1st)– Fall 2026, Construction

NEPA and Design/Construction Schedule

Questions / Answers

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